

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are present in this application. Claim 1 is independent.

Specification – Objection/Rejection

The specification has been objected to for the phrase “at least two planetary gears.” In addition, claims 2-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to provide an enabling disclosure. Applicants traverse this rejection.

Applicants submit that the scope of enablement is commensurate with the scope of protection sought by the claims (M.P.E.P. § 2164.08). For example, as indicated in the Office Action embodiments disclosed in the present application show a changeover means including two planetary gears. Applicants submit that the phrase “at least two planetary gears” clearly sets forth a commensurate scope of the claimed subject matter as precluding one planetary gear.

In any case, the claims have been amended to recite the commonly used phrase “a plurality of.” Applicants submit that the claims clearly set forth the scope of protection sought.

Applicants request that the rejection and related objection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,862,446 (Hashizume). Claim 1 has been amended to explicitly recite that the changeover

means includes a plurality of planetary gears. Applicants traverse this rejection based on the claims as amended.

In disclosed embodiments of the present invention, simply by changing the rotation direction of the motor gear 24, a changeover is realized between the driving force for the scanner module 16 and the driving force for the automatic document feeder 12. In particular, a changeover results from a change in rotation direction of the motor that leads to a switch over of the engagement of the first planetary gear 27 and the second planetary gear 28 of the planetary gear apparatus 25 (specification at page 24).

The Office Action states that, “Hashizume et al. discloses an image reading apparatus comprising changeover means (4) ...” The Office Action further alleges that Hashizume’s disclosure of returning the image scanner to the “home position” constitutes the claimed switching over, by moving the reading means (returning the image scanner 2 to home position is mentioned at col. 7, lines 54-56).

Hashizume’s invention relates to a modification of disclosed background art. The motor gear of Hashizume’s invention is driven in either the clockwise direction or the counter-clockwise direction in order to drive the image scanner 2. Similarly, the motor gear of Hashizume’s invention is driven in either the clockwise or the counter-clockwise direction in order to drive the feeder 3 (col. 8, lines 61-65). A further aspect of Hashizume’s invention is that when a solenoid 473 is in the ON-state, driving the motor in the clockwise direction can cause the P-gear 46 to move toward the image scanner 2 (col. 7, lines 29-34). Similarly, driving the

motor in the counter-clockwise direction can cause the P-gear to move toward the document feeder 3 (col. 8, lines 27-34).

Thus, unlike embodiments disclosed in the present application, Hashizume's switching mechanism uses a solenoid for moving a stopper between a restrict position and a release position. The restrict position may restrict changing in engagement with the document feeder or image scanner even when the direction of the motor is reversed (e.g., between time t5 and t6; see col. 7, line 52, to col. 8, line 7).

On the other hand, embodiments disclosed in the present application do not require a solenoid. Instead, a simple change in the direction of rotation of the motor gear leads to switching over between driving the document feeder and the image scanner. Such a simple arrangement is accomplished in part by a planetary gear apparatus.

Therefore, Applicants submit that Hashizume fails to teach or suggest the claimed changeover means, at least with respect to the feature of "wherein the changeover means includes a plurality of planetary gears."

Applicants request that the rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

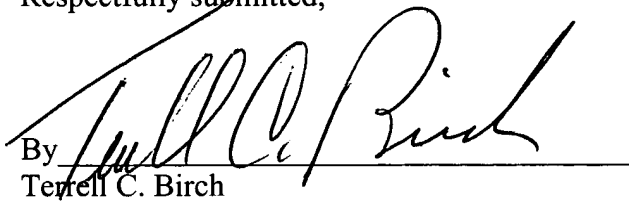
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert W. Downs (Reg. No.

48,222) at the telephone number of (703) 205-8000, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: March 29, 2006

Respectfully submitted,



By

Terrell C. Birch

RWD

Registration No.: 19,382

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

8110 Gatehouse Road

Suite 100 East

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

Attorney for Applicants